

# Police discover similarities in prostitute deaths

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By Harry Harris  
The Tribune

VICE

Five prostitutes who worked downtown and in West Oakland have been slain in the last three months but police are not fully convinced the same person is responsible.

"We could have one killer or we could have five killers," one investigator said yesterday.

Three of the victims were shot to death. Two were savagely beaten. Except that all the women had records of arrests for prostitution or sex-related offenses and worked the same areas there are not that many other similarities, investigators said.

"The similarities cannot be ignored, but it's a little premature at this point to say if they're connected," Capt. Jim Hahn said.

Added homicide Sgt. Robert Chenault: "There are similarities between them, but there are also numerous differences."

The five slayings are grim reminders that the world's oldest profession is among the most dangerous, but have not stopped prostitutes from trading sex for money.

Connie, who works 36th Street near the California Hotel, said most of the prostitutes "have to be out here — no matter what — to pay for their drugs. They're so doped up they can't stop."

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*'We could have one killer or we could have five killers.'*

— A police investigator

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Another prostitute, working near 29th and San Pablo, said she thinks many other street-walkers won't stop working "because they don't think it's gonna be them."

"It's not an issue of getting in the car or if they're going to die," said the woman, who asked that her name not be used. "They just think it just won't be them."

The woman said all prostitutes, including herself, are taking more precautions, like refusing "car dates" unless the customer is a regular.

"You can screen the man more carefully, of course, but how can you be sure? What can you do to fight against a gun?"

The most recent victim was Debra Lynn Adkins, 29, found bludgeoned to death Sunday morning at the entrance to Roberts Park on Skyline Boulevard in the Oakland hills.

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Adkins, who lived in downtown Oakland, had been released from the Oakland City Jail about 11:45 p.m. Saturday after being arrested earlier in the day for public drunkenness, said Sgt. Dana Weaver of the East Bay Regional Park District Police, who is investigating her death.

According to Oakland Municipal Court records, Adkins has been arrested and charged in the past after being caught engaging in sex acts with men in their vehicles at different downtown locations.

Her sister, Deborah Stilwell, of Cloverdale, said learning about her sister's prostitution background was a shock to her.

"Whenever I saw her she was up and positive," Stilwell said.

Stilwell said her sister was given up for adoption by their mother at birth, but when her adopted mother died some 15 years ago "she came looking for us."

She said Adkins never turned down legitimate employment and had worked as a waitress and railroad steward.

The other four killings are being investigated by Oakland police, who have compared notes with EBRPD police. The victims are:

■ Teresa Ann Greenlee, 26, found slain Sept. 25 under a freeway overpass in the 3400 block of Louise Street in West Oakland. She had been shot in the head. She was last seen alive the night before, walking in the 2300 block of San Pablo Avenue.

■ Five days earlier, on Sept. 20, Annie Green, 29, was found shot to death just a few blocks away at 36th and Peralta streets,

also underneath a freeway overpass. Green, who lived in West MacArthur Boulevard motels, was known to work the 3000 block of San Pablo Avenue. Besides arrests for prostitution, court records show arrests for drug offenses.

■ Kim Williams, 24, a shooting victim, was found partially nude about 7 a.m. Sept. 6 beside the steps at the rear entrance to Oakland's Rose Garden at Vernon Street and Monte Vista Avenue. Known to police and co-workers alike as Chocolate, she also lived in West MacArthur motels and was known to frequent San Pablo Avenue.

■ The other beating victim was Mary Sims, 29, whose nude body was found on the doorstep of a home in the 3200 block of Kansas Street in East Oakland July 31. Sims, who was also known as Mary Boccalini, Mary E. Crisp and Crystal Sims, had last been seen about 5 p.m. the previous day in the area of 19th and Castro streets, police said.

Investigators feel that all the victims were probably picked up by their killers and so far police have spent dozens of hours interviewing prostitutes and others hoping to find someone who may have witnessed the women getting into cars.

# 6th Oakland prostitute slain, but no link seen yet by police

Prostitution

By Harry Harris  
The Tribune

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The nude body of a 23-year-old woman was found hanging in an East Oakland park yesterday, the sixth Oakland prostitute slain in little more than two months.

Police will not say the cases are linked, and a detective said it was "premature" to discuss the possibility of a serial killer.

Sharon Falise Frazier, whose birthday was Tuesday, was found hanging from a tree at Burckhalter Park, a rope looped around her neck.

Police Capt. Jim Hahn said Frazier died of strangulation, the first such death in any of the cases. Three of the other victims were shot and two beaten.

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Wheels that move  
on tracks like a  
railroad.

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Hahn cautioned saying that a serial killer — someone who commits a series of similar murders — “is out there . . . It’s probably a little premature at this point.”

“There is no evidence that would point to a single suspect,” he said.

Hahn said there “are some similarities” between this slaying and the other five. “However, there are some gross dissimilarities.”

All that the victims have in common is that they are all women in their 20s with drug and prostitution records.

Hahn said it was the “gross dissimilarities,” on which he would not elaborate, that made police cautious about linking the cases.

One dissimilarity he did point out was the difference in the causes of death.

When asked if there was a “sick trick” who may be killing the women in anger, Hahn said a large number of prostitutes have been interviewed by homicide investigators, and “what we have been able to determine is that a large portion of the people they deal with are sick.”

Yesterday’s victim was found about 7 a.m. inside Burckhalter Park, which is on Edwards Avenue adjacent to Interstate 580. The tree the body was hanging from is in the right field portion of the baseball diamond, be-

Toronto outfielder yelled at Bob Welch on the mound.  
A’s manager Tony La Russa just hopes the pot doesn’t boil over in Game 3 tonight.

tween a bathroom and a small playground.

Hahn said the body was brought to the park sometime after 10 p.m. when a softball game ended.

Burckhalter Park has recently become a meeting place for upper-level narcotics dealers to discuss business with each other, police said. It has a dark parking lot that has been used in the past by prostitutes and their customers.

The woman killed yesterday was known to work MacArthur Boulevard from 73rd Avenue east to the San Leandro border. That would make her the first among the recent victims to have worked that area, the rest having sold sex in downtown and West Oakland.

She was also a drug user who occasionally sold drugs along MacArthur, police said.

MacArthur Boulevard, where Frazier was known to work, was quiet last night, and few women working the street would talk. But one woman, obviously scared and in a hurry, said she had worked as a prostitute until a few weeks ago when she was beaten and sexually assaulted with a .357-magnum pistol.

“I’m spooked,” the woman, who called herself Isis, said. “I won’t work anymore.”

Other prostitutes killed include:

■ Debra Lynn Adkins, 29, found bludgeoned early Sunday



**Sharon Falise Frazier**  
*Found hanged*

morning at the entrance to Roberts Park off Skyline Boulevard in the Oakland hills.

■ Teresa Ann Greenlee, 26, found shot in the head under a freeway overpass in the 3400 block of Louise Street in West Oakland.

■ Annie Green, 29, found found shot to death Sept. 20 at 36th and Peralta streets, also under a freeway overpass.

■ Kim McWilliams, 24, street name “Chocolate,” a shooting victim whose semi-nude body was found about 7 a.m. Sept. 6 beside the steps at the rear entrance to Oakland’s Rose Garden, at Vernon Street and Monte Vista Avenue.

■ Mary Sims, 29, a beating victim whose nude body was found on the doorstep of a home in the 3200 block of Kansas Street in East Oakland on July 31.